



News Release

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For Immediate Release:

The Sierra National Forest and USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Receive Funds through the Joint Chiefs Landscape Restoration Partnership

CLOVIS, Calif., February 10, 2017 – The Sierra National Forest and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) have been awarded \$3.3 million to implement the “Central Sierra Recovery and Restoration” Project through the Joint Chiefs’ Landscape Restoration Partnership. This funding will allow the Forest Service and NRCS, along with state and local partners, to continue to improve the health and resiliency of forest ecosystems where public forests and grasslands connect to private lands.

“This collaboration is helping local partners meet the growing challenges that come with protecting communities, watersheds, forests and woodlands from the devastating and costly impacts of wildfires and other threats, protecting water resources, and improving wildlife habitat,” said Dean Gould, forest supervisor for the Sierra National Forest.

The Central Sierra Recovery and Restoration Project encompasses the front country of the Sierra National Forest and adjacent private lands from the Merced River to the Kings River. The project area covers more than 400,000 acres of National Forest System lands as well as private ranches and timberlands, organizational camps, recreation residences, and twelve isolated communities & subdivisions. This area also provides habitat for many threatened, endangered, and at-risk species.

“With this funding, our vision is to restore landscapes, reduce wildfire threats to communities and landowners, protect water quality and supply, and improve habitat for at-risk species, while working seamlessly across public and private lands,” said Curtis Tarver, assistant state conservationist for NRCS in California.

The Central Sierra Recovery and Restoration Project area has been heavily impacted by extended drought conditions and insect infestations that have caused extensive mortality of many tree species throughout the Sierra Nevada. Threats to this landscape include falling trees, potential for extreme wildfire intensity with associated risks to communities, loss of habitat for wildlife, and post-fire sedimentation into reservoirs resulting in degraded water quality and reduced water storage and availability.

Through the Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership, NRCS and the Forest Service will invest \$32 million nationwide in fiscal year 2017, add 10 new projects and support 26 ongoing partnership projects. Partners will bring an additional \$30 million through financial and in-kind contributions over three years for implementing the 10 new projects.

For full project descriptions and information on completed and ongoing projects, visit the USDA Joint Chiefs' Landscape Restoration Partnership [website](#).

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The mission of the U.S. Forest Service, part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is to sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the nation's forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The agency manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than \$13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation's clean water supply, a value estimated at \$7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live.